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**WE
CARE.**

specialize in work with young peo-
ple who have dropped out of
school, schoolchildren, or
families.

Meltzer, who belongs to the
last category, has between 150
and 200 "files" to take care of —
many of them visible on her desk
or windowsill. She spends eight
hours every Wednesday receiving
a succession of clients in the office
she shares with another worker.
The rest of the week is spent on
home visits and arranging the
care of clients with other in-
stitutions — schools, hospitals, in-
stitutions for the handicapped,
National Insurance, etc.

Even when she sits in the office
doing paperwork, a head in-
evitably peers in at the door.
Sometimes an emergency. And
sometimes Mrs. D, whose laundry
won't dry, whose son (here at her
side) is sick and staying home
from school.

"We are all-purpose garbage
cans," Meltzer said. "Other in-
stitutions have definite laws
regarding their responsibilities.
We get the cast-offs they can't
help."

(The present welfare law dates
from 1958. Discussion of a new bill
has begun in the Ministry and
related agencies, but the shaky
coalition will keep it from the
Knesset at least until after the
elections.)

The work is frustrating, drain-
ing, Meltzer continued. The policy
is unclear, the problems en-
trenched. The accomplishments
are few, though things — people —
do change.

MRS. D, in fashionable green cor-
duroy, had "something good to
tell for once," she said. She had
accepted the last of several
apartments offered her by Prazot.
She went to see it by herself,
reluctantly, and said okay. She
will pay about IL2,000 for the two-
room flat, then get a six-month
reprieve, and start regular, low
monthly payments.

Meltzer gave me some
background. Mrs. D was a
second-generation welfare client;
she had one son by a former hus-
band, and another by a "man-
about-town," since deceased. She
was used to stopping in at the
welfare office whenever there was
any responsibility to be taken —
or, last week, for instance, to com-
plain that the laundry wouldn't
dry in her apartment. The walls
were damp and it was raining.

Now, she was back, proud of
herself for making the decision,
though edgy about going through
with it. Meltzer told her she would
get a kitchen table and chairs
from the office — encouragement
in setting up a new home.

"EVERY DAY is different,"
Meltzer said. "And with ex-
perience, the diagnosis of a situa-
tion — like a crossword puzzle —
is a little easier." You do get feed-
back, and people are grateful for
help.

Meltzer has a liberal arts B.A.,
but no degree in social work. Like
about a third of the office's 40
social workers, she will have to
undergo training if she wants to
continue much longer. Just how
long can one do this work and
maintain emotional balance? She
isn't sure.

"All humanity has problems,
and you begin to see the same
ones among your friends. If you
continue in the field for many
years, it can disrupt your personal
life."

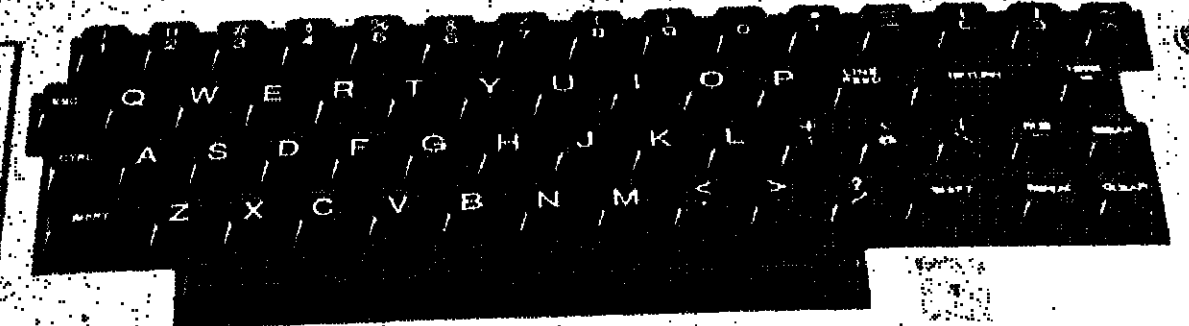
Success is ill-defined in this job.
The paperwork, though
necessary, abounds. What keeps
Simone Meltzer going is this:
"When you succeed, it's not with
paper, but with people." □

HIGHLIGHTS

From the consolidated statement of
condition as at December 31, 1976

	1976	1975	Change
	IL	IL	(%)
Total assets	35,808,923,148	25,179,811,446	+46.2
Deposits (including deposits for loan purposes)	30,752,124,461	20,369,100,840	+48.4
Cash and due from banks	14,192,510,479	9,278,718,642	+53.0
Loans	10,731,078,188	7,874,401,525	+36.3
Capital accounts	913,531,680	649,768,337	+40.6
Operating income before taxation	304,147,296	238,040,569	+28.6
Provision for taxation	180,301,253	152,713,853	+24.6
Net operating income	101,710,274	74,186,102	+37.1
Net income per share	10.98	9.40	+16.6

* Including Israel Discount Bank, Barclays Discount Bank, Mercantile
Bank of Israel, Israel Development and Mortgage Bank, Manpikim —
Discount Bank Issues Corporation and Israel Discount Trust Company,
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The full audited financial statements are available for perusal at all
branches of the bank.



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THE BLACK ECONOMY totally distorted the functioning of the country's economy. Construction, the magnet and giant creator of black capital, was attracting more and more people — not workers, but agents and non-productive personnel.

Since a sub-contractor earned three or four times as much as a skilled worker, but paid only one-third the income tax, more and more sub-contractors and sub-sub-contractors entered the scene.

In 1963, 82,400 men worked in construction in Israel, but only 6,200 of them were self-employed. In 1969, 80,600 worked in the trade, but 14,700 were self-employed. In 1970, there were 91,300 construction workers, of whom 17,300 were independent; and in 1972 the respective figures were 125,400 and 24,100. (Arabs from the West Bank made up a large and steadily increasing proportion of this work force.)

But the number of flats being built rose very slightly during that 10-year period, despite the 50 per cent increase in workers and the increased use of modern and expensive mechanical equipment.

The profits rose at such a rate that no one seemed to care that productivity was decreasing. According to official figures, a four-storey building in the public sector that took 10-12 months to complete in 1967 took 18-20 months in 1974.

That year, the inflation rate rose to almost 80 per cent as a result of the Yom Kippur War. This was the year of victory for the black economy. Militarily, the IDF won the war; politically, the Arabs won; and economically, the black economy emerged triumphant.

The small amounts in tax that were collected from the millionaires were returned to them twofold in the form of concealed subsidies — cheap credit, subsidies disguised as decreases in salary, and differences in the rates of the Government issued especially for the black financiers.

The revenue that the Government was not collecting as taxes was now being collected in the form of index-linked loans with an interest rate of 68 per cent.

In the summer of 1974, black finance officially celebrated its victory: the Government offered 5,500 flats for sale to young married couples, but only 700 couples signed up for them. These were mainly members of the second generation of black capital, because although the flats were subsidized by the state, they were still too highly priced for the rest of the population. The taxes paid by the workers were subsidizing reduced-rate flats for the children of tax-evaders.

This was the final consequence of the building of the Bar-Lev Line. Before it was constructed, building costs in Israel were among the lowest in the world; after its construction, they became the highest.

IN THE FISCAL YEAR 1973-74, the official national income was IL11b. Of this, close to IL4.9b. was paid as income tax, IL2.1b. as national insurance, and approximately IL2.5b. as fees to associations and sick funds, and taxes to municipalities.

Therefore, the public was left with IL2.5b. If we add another IL3.8b. reaching individuals from abroad (even if this included large amounts of black money coming back to Israel in the form of "transfers of capital"), we get a disposable private income of

BLACK VICTORY

After the Yom Kippur War, tax-evasion amounted to IL20b., while only IL4.9b. was paid as income tax, writes BARUCH NADEL. In this third article on "black money," he continues his examination of the social and economic consequences of the construction of the Bar-Lev Line.



IL25.8b. How much of this was saved by the population?

The official figure for private savings in Israel that year (not including the very large amount of concealed savings) was IL13.7b. — 53 per cent of the available private income. If this were divided by the number of people in the country, each person should have saved IL4,100; an average family of five should have saved IL21,700 per month. This in a year when the available income of two-thirds of the providers in Israel did not even officially reach IL4,700 per month; in a year when the tax authorities determined that the available average income of the self-employed was IL1,400 per month.

In fact, the national income that year was not IL11b., as determined by the tax authorities and the Central Bureau of Statistics, but almost twice that. If we assume that the rate of personal savings reached 25 per cent in

Israel — and this is higher than the figure in Western countries — this would put the true national income at about IL55b. and not IL31b. But even this is a conservative figure, since there are diverse forms of personal "black" savings — such as the transfer of capital to foreign banks — which cannot be calculated from the official figures.

Twenty-four billion pounds in taxable income does not appear in any of our statistics. It includes the income of about 850,000 providers who were not listed at all with the tax authorities, and the black income of the listed self-employed who earned IL20,000 a month, but were assessed at IL4,200. It also includes the profits of the "small" textile manufacturers who were earning IL5,000 or IL20,000, and were assessed at a rate of IL800 per month.

Approximately how much tax evasion was there, then, in 1973-74?

On declared income: In Sweden, where taxes are lower than in Israel, 26-27 per cent of the GNP is collected in taxes. Using the same calculations for Israel, we find that while IL4.9b. was collected, an additional IL7b. should have been collected.

On undeclared income: On the IL24b. which was not reported to the tax authorities, income tax should have been charged at the rate of at least 50 per cent. Thus, IL12-14b. was not paid in taxes on "black money."

Thus, tax-evasion in 1973-74 totalled IL20b.

IF BEFORE THE 1968-69 fiscal year the tax authorities only collected about one-third of the amount required by law, then after the construction of the Bar-Lev Line they have been collecting less than one-quarter.

For all practical purposes, almost all the self-employed have been removed from the tax

network, and, according to my estimate, companies have been paying only half of what they should.

A number of wage-earners have also contributed to the black economy, some by working in part-time "black" jobs, and others through legal tax concessions — such as those granted to powerful groups of journalists, writers, lecturers, professors, and so on.

But there were always those who ground their teeth and paid the tax authorities in full, with money that would have been paid for their children's high school education or new clothing.

In the recession year 1966-67, when the situation of the self-employed was relatively poor, they were still paying 23 per cent of the overall tax revenue (instead of the 36 per cent paid from 1948-1959).

In 1968-69, when the economy began to flourish as a result of the Six Day War and the enormous American grants, when construction increased and shops that handled imported goods sprouted like mushrooms, the self-employed paid only 20.7 per cent of the overall tax revenue in Israel.

In the year that the Bar-Lev Line was fortified, it decreased to 19.7 per cent, and in 1970-71, when black capital spread throughout the country and salaries were frozen by a "package deal," it decreased again to 19 per cent.

In 1972-73, the self-employed paid 18.2 per cent of the overall tax revenue; in 1973-74, 14 per cent, and in 1974-75, 12.5 per cent.

In those years the tax authorities finally determined that the average income of an earthworks contractor, a diamond merchant, a building contractor, a merchant on Tel Aviv's Allenby St., or an owner of a vegetable stand in the shuk, was lower than the average salary of a wage-earner.

In the fiscal year 1970-71, the national income officially rose by 17 per cent, but the revenue assessments of the self-employed rose by only 5.4 per cent; in 1971-72, the official national income rose by 23.2 per cent and that of the self-employed by 12.7 per cent; and in 1972-73 the figures were 25.7 per cent and 13.7 per cent.

INCOME TAX turned into a national joke, a joke which oppressed the majority of the wage-earners and the few honest self-employed, a joke which created tens of billions of "black" Israeli pounds annually, which led to increases in prices of flats, furniture, personal services, and certain foods, and turned tax-payers into amputees in a footrace against car-owners.

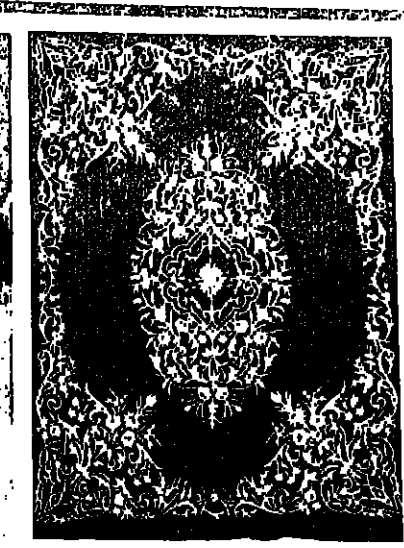
The economic and social gaps grew larger by the day. The worker was sinking, the middleman was rising, the manufacturer was having difficulties, the importer was becoming rich, the tax authorities were exploiting those who were useful to the economy, and ignoring those who were harmful to the economy.

The situation became so bad that the one-man battle I waged was sufficient to explode the conspiracy of silence on tax-evasion, and to bring about a fundamental reform in the tax laws and their enforcement.

But reforms in Israel have a strange tendency to further enmesh and perpetuate all the distortions they are supposed to eliminate. The Ben-Shahar reform, and the total elimination of the "white economy" will be discussed in the fourth and last article of this series. □



Afghan Jew wearing silk "coat of many colours."



Gold-embroidered velvet bed-spread from Turkey, part of a Sephardi trousseau.



Traditional Moroccan wedding robe.

Itself: funds were always needed for "more pressing" requirements. Successive Ministers of Education as well as the Jewish Agency showed an interest in the Ethnography Department's "salvage ethnology," a concept coined 20 years ago, but did nothing to help.

Only recently has the Education Ministry raised its miserly annual research grant to IL50,000, a sum still less than half of what is needed to make minimum purchases and keep three half-time field workers employed. The current year's ethnology research has been kept afloat by the contributions of three businessmen, two of them Israelis, the third Swiss. The Jewish Memorial Foundation of New York gave the sums for the first push, but did not keep up its grants.

Nevertheless, salvage ethnology, carried out by the one-and-a-half curators allowed by the Israel Museum's budget, has already succeeded in preserving for posterity a picture of the life of the Jewish communities of Yemen, Bukhara and Morocco; and, to some extent, of Eastern Europe. The curators are now tackling Kurdistan, with Persia, Afghanistan and Turkey yet to be confronted.

"Jewish life in Morocco," the massive and utterly fascinating show mounted at the Israel Museum in 1973 (which also included valuable exhibits from international collections and museums), was a major cultural event and an eye-opener even for Israelis from North Africa, who viewed it with enormous pride. It also produced a magnificent catalogue, a scholarly work in itself. The show should have been a shot in the arm for "salvage ethnology," but somehow the department is still bereft of funds.

It also has no place to display its treasures, which are carefully wrapped, wound or folded in the store-rooms of the Museum. The Oriental costumes and jewellery on permanent display upstairs are

collections of Jewish ethnography to be had. Indeed, the Museum is performing a unique service to the Jewish people everywhere by building one. It began with small nucleus comprising the Schocken Yeminite collection, put together by a non-Jew in the Thirties, and objects from Mordecai Narkiss's collection, as well as a major donation of North African items.

IS THERE such a thing as Jewish ethnography? Many of the treasures at the Museum are not Jewish at all: the criterion is whether they were part of Jewish life, whether they were used by Jews or made by them.

Judaica — Jewish ritual objects — are excluded from this research; enough material on them is already available.

Part of the ethnographer's problem is to locate the uses of his finds in time as well as in social and geographical space. Before 1950, a certain type of legging was worn only by Jewish girls in San'a, Yemen. It has now been enthusiastically adopted as the latest chic by Moslem girls there.

A wedding dress of a design used exclusively by Moroccan Jews and displayed in the 1973 exhibition was found to be the remnant surviving example of court dresses last worn in Spain by non-Jews at the time of Ferdinand and Isabella. Recent research among the Kurdish community here has revealed that certain rugs were designed, woven and used exclusively by Jews.

THERE IS no research being done outside Israel into Jewish ethnography. There aren't even any curators in the field. The Museum's staff is self-taught and the curators perform a valuable service in training a small cadre of future curators — one man and three young women, who now do most of the field work.

Ideally, this should also include visits to countries of origin and international ethnological collec-

Museum field-worker participating in festivities at a Kurdish moshav.



CULTURAL TIME-BOMB

Twenty-six years after the mass immigration of Oriental Jews to Israel, many of their artefacts are disappearing from circulation. Post Art Editor MEIR RONNEN visits the Ethnography Department of the Israel Museum and describes how a dedicated handful of people are fighting to locate and preserve these cultural treasures.

TWENTY-SIX years ago this winter, Israel's ma'abarot tent cities were filled with cold, miserable immigrants, the majority of them refugees from Moslem states. Often, the only bright spots in a grey expanse of mud were the colourful costumes worn by the men and women from North Africa, Yemen, Iraq, Kurdistan. Scattered around them were the handmade cooking utensils they had managed to bring with them.

These immigrants were sitting on an historical treasure-chest, a first-hand source for a little-explored subject: Jewish ethnography.

Twenty-six years later, many of these treasures have disappeared. What is worse, the people who actually made them, or who knew how they were made and for what they had been used in their community, are dying out. Their children and grandchildren, clad in T-shirts and jeans, know

less about their own family's cultural heritage and treasures than the handful of researchers at the Israel Museum. The Ethnography curator there estimates that in ten years' time, research will no longer be possible. The grandparents with the information will be dead.

Furthermore, their grandchildren are now affluent enough to be able to afford to keep their family heirlooms. If they do part with them, they ask exorbitant prices. A Kurdish-Jewish dress that might have been purchased for IL10 a few years ago is now offered to the Museum at IL5,000, and it is one of the last of its kind. Can the Museum refuse?

Most folk art has a charm missing from our mass-manufactured artefacts. The wisdom and collective talent of generations often results in objects of startling beauty; for instance, some

Kurdish-Jewish materials are, in colour and design, far superior to anything exhibited by contemporary artists in our commercial galleries.

But, as a result, the Museum's researcher often finds herself competing with private art collectors. David St., in Jerusalem's Old City, provides an example: small 19th century Palestinian Arab embroidery sold for IL6 each in 1967 are now fetching IL2,000; while wall hangings from Bukhara and Kabul that went for IL500 three years ago now cost well over IL15,000. Arab merchants wave catalogues from the British Museum under your nose.

THE TICKING of this cultural time-bomb has long been heard at the Ethnography Department of the Israel Museum, but has been drowned out elsewhere, even in the board room of the Museum

only the tip of the iceberg and are offered for view as attractive art objects, not as ethnology with didactic documentation.

The Museum's master-plan calls for an ethnology pavilion, but it would cost nearly \$1m. to build. Money would also be needed for maintenance. But the research and purchasing programme is far more urgent.

Paradoxically, our national Museum has a wing for "neighbouring cultures" which have no relation to Jewish life, and is building a new youth wing so that an ethnographic wing for pre-Columbian, African and Oceanic arts can be installed. Of course a national museum needs such a wing, and the recent acquisition of a number of famous collections has been made conditional on their display (some of the donors also helped with funds).

By comparison, there are no

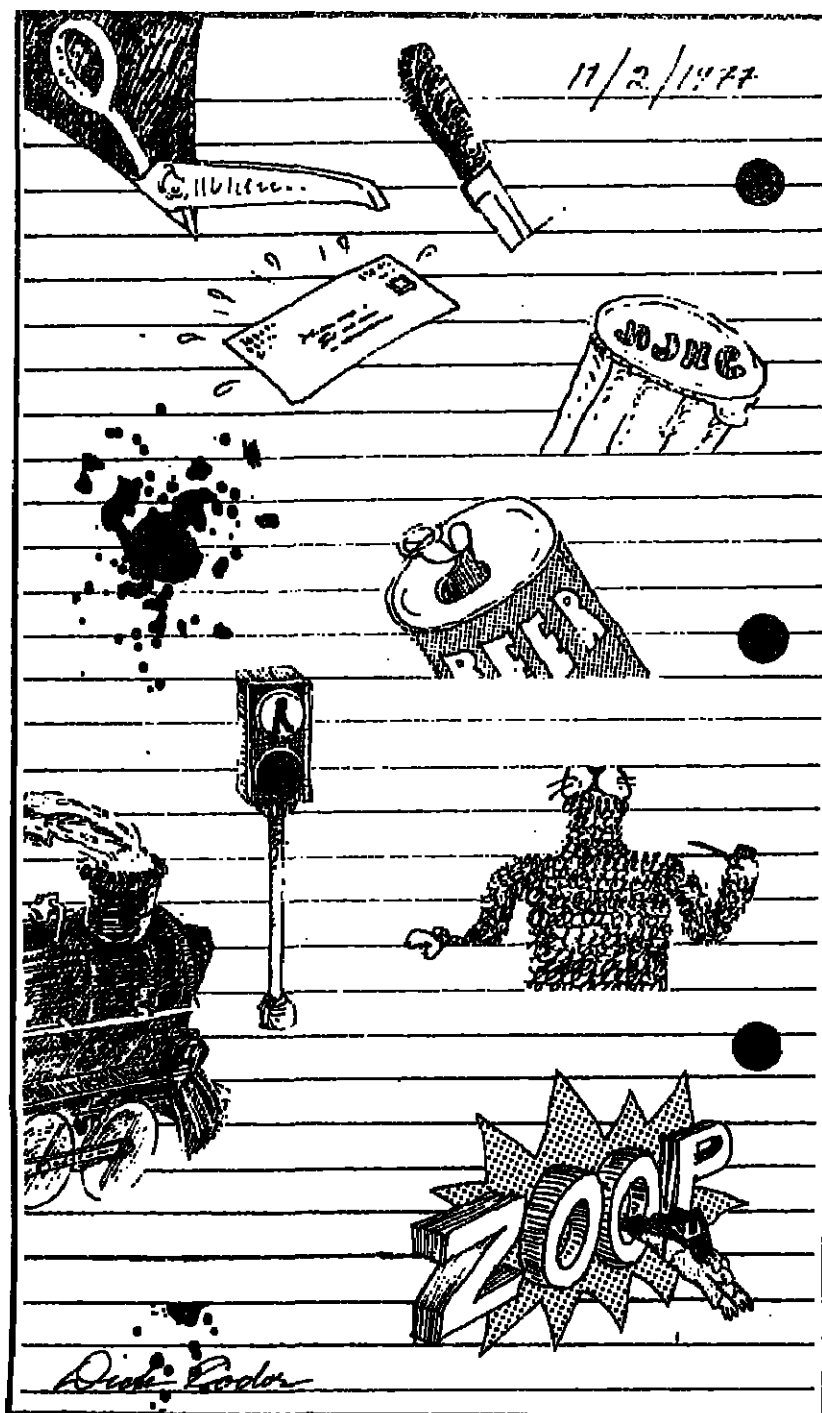
tions. But the older generation of immigrants here remains the primary source. The field workers visit out-of-the-way moshavim to follow up clues, and will show an object independently to at least 10 different persons before accepting a verdict on its origin and use.

The Museum's ethnology curator cannot run her own private fund campaign; she needs, however, more than the sympathy. The next International Board of Governors meeting might well make salvage ethnology its major topic for discussion.

Of course, one or two fairy godfathers or godmothers could solve many of the immediate problems. But it seems easier to find a donor to give his Picasso to the Museum. The price of one Picasso, by the way, would be enough to carry out the research on the material culture of the entire Kurdish Jewish community. □

لقد كان الأصل

Education notes



Helga Dudman

REGISTRATION is now open for the following courses, a source announced yesterday.

Opening Air Letters.

Students accepted for this course will be asked to bring compass, serrated carving knife, glue, periscope, mitre block, and samples of dissected mail.

Emphasis will be on group participation in developing perception by peering through side of envelope to decide whether the letter is to be sliced in thirds or in sixths.

Open-ended discussions will compare the American air letter with its Israeli counterpart, students to play the parts of these air-letters. They will devise playlets centring on such topics as: Is it better to be unable to glue the thing together (as in the un-gummed Israeli air letter) or to be on the receiving end and unable to open it up (as in the American model)?

How to Peel OK about Wearing your Sweater under your Shirt.

Intended for Old Timers, this course will grapple with the funny feelings often repressed by veteran soldiers when called upon to put their shirts on over their sweaters. Small discussion groups will analyse the "logic of illogic" in putting on the lightweight garment over the heavier one, and

the "peeling problem" in modern life.

The emergence of the tortoiseshell in casual-dynamic societies and the uncomfy bulkiness of turtles over shirt-collars will be demonstrated. Separation into men's and women's groups if requested by participants.

Crossing the Street

For gifted pedestrians. Light athletics will be emphasized, in the form of group crossings at various intersections in Tel Aviv. Locations will include pedestrian crossings with various timings of the stop-lights. An end-of-term gala crossing will take place at Allenby near Rothschild, where traffic lights give pedestrians six seconds to cross. Practice runs for this event will be held throughout the year at such locations as the five-way intersection which marks the birth of Ibn Gvirol. Here, "real life" assignments will include such challenges as crossing Ibn Gvirol from the northwest to the northeast corner.

Skilled teachers will encourage students, employing psychodrama and rude shouts; to circumnavigate legally, i.e., from Point A south across Marek, timing wait with stopwatch as 200 cars flow past; then southeast across Yehuda Halevi, where whistling timeously will be optional during red light and another 200 cars; then east across Carlebach, with selected reading and conversational English dur-

ing red light; and finally, tired but happy, into the sunset north across Hama'stina to reach our goal, Point B, directly opposite A, on the other side of Ibn Gvirol.

Outstanding students will be presented to President Katzir. On completion of this course, students will receive a certificate entitling them to throw banana peels at cars parked on sidewalks. "Legally or illegally, it doesn't matter," said a spokesman spiritedly. "On some things, there is a higher law."

Any participant found taking the easy way out of crossing the street — i.e., getting into a car and driving around the block — will be disqualified.

Old ladies will not be accepted, unless they make a terrific fuss about how spry they are, or have been recent members of Olympic track teams. For those not wishing to get back across the street by retracing the same devious route, special courses in guerrilla tactics and night crossings with full pack may be offered.

Art Circle

In response to tremendous demand, and as a result of enraged public opinion at the unfair adulation extended to "Christo Wrappings," a series of neighbourhood demonstrations on wrapping your very own district in plastic.

"It is a national scandal that this New York Bulgarian gets all this money and newspaper coverage for wrapping the countryside in nylon, when we have been pioneers in this art form," said the source agitatedly, throwing a nylon shopping bag out of the car window.

"Just look at the Negev, which we have made to bloom with dunams and dunams of plastic protective crop wrappings. Note the breathtaking Mobius-like intertwining of polyethylene conceptualism with rows of strawberry plants and gladioli! Note how the wind then billows them hither and thither, in mind-boggling formations of random post-socialist environmental confrontations."

Working with art trouble available in every courtyard, housewives will be shown how to focus attention on towers of leben and yogurt containers, lying all about us unrevealed.

Beer cans are not really fair because of their questionable half-life. Students may package the Red Line and the Green Line, for export, and for credit, on condition that they maintain an attitude of reverence.

Students' work of special merit will be exhibited and sold in intimate galleries in several hundred private homes in Zahala, Ramat Aviv, Neve Avivim and Afeke.

Special Course for Aliya Emisaries.

Since we have long been coasting on a collection of empty and meaningless old clichés, this course will concentrate on building up a collection of empty and meaningless new clichés.

Students are asked to bring to the workshops any old committees, councils, ministries, agencies, authorities, and inter-ministerial bodies they may have lying around unused at home in their closets. Every effort will be made to return them at the end of the course.

Guest lecturers will include: opted directors from ZOO (Zionist Organization of Organizations), OOO (Organization of Overseas Zionists), and ZOOZ (Zionist Organ of Other Presidents).

Light stallions will be served.

A diet of Worms

CALEB'S COLUMN
N. David Gross

NO, I AM NOT poaching on the preserves of my culinary-sophisticated friend further down these pages, nor am I recommending unpalatable as a life style, although I do like *lokshen* — and my sister does too. My headline refers to an assembly (or day's work, in the original meaning of the word in this context) held in the ancient Rhenish city known to the Romans as Borbetomagus. (You too can appear erudite if you have access to an early set of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, especially the eleventh edition.)

Worms has many claims to fame. It was the source of *Hebraumilch*, which some xenophiles say is, at its best, in some ways almost as good as the "hock" of Rishon. It was the setting of some of the Nibelungenlied idylls. It was at one of the diets of Worms that a boomeranging ban was imposed on Luther, giving impetus to the Reformation and translation of the Bible into European languages. In Worms, in 1743, a highly unlikely alliance was forged between Britain, Austria and Sardinia — apparently important countries in those days. Can you imagine Callaghan, Kresley and who is it that manages Sardinia these days? — trying to determine the fate of the world.

Worms also claims to have had the oldest Jewish settlement in Central Europe — at least as far back as the year 588. It was here that the unphilosophic, gordian-knot-cutting Rashi absorbed Talmud and where the saintly Meir Rothenburg was buried, 14 years after his death as a Prisoner of Zion.

Apart from the usual run-of-the-mill pogroms, expulsions, Crusader massacres, tooth-pulling, economic and physical

thumb-screwing and so on, the Jews of Worms were on fairly good terms with their neighbours. In fact there is an early legend which relates that the Worms Jews were against the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. The messenger carrying their vote arrived at Jerusalem too late to be effective.

WHY I HAVE dug all this up now is that today is the anniversary of the secular calendar of a remarkable event in the history of the Jews of Europe.

On February 11, in the year 1201 (Cecil Roth gives the date) Otto of Brunswick, the Wolf who was to become Holy Roman Emperor, laid siege to Worms. The Jews of the city joined their fellow burghers in armed defence. (They obtained rabbinic sanction for this as it was a Sabbath day.) This combatance, says Roth, shows "there was, as yet, no effective prejudice on either side (that is Christians and Jews, not Wormers and Wolfs) against the bearing of arms by Jews."

"As yet," writes the historian. I don't know when this particular prejudice came into being or how long it lasted but, as this paper noted a few days ago, the West German Defence Minister, Georg Leber, has stated that more Jews died in defence of their Fatherland in the First World War than in defence of the motherland in all of Israel's wars since 1948.

ONE LAST WORD on Worms: It is related that Ezra, at the time of the Return from the Babylonian Exile, wrote to the Jews of Worms to come and assist in the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. They responded. Early Zionists. When they thought the work was accomplished they returned home, taking with them some of the daughters of Zion, who were fruitful and created German Jewry. Early yordim. □

Salzboim's racket

Ephraim Kishon

WE ARE SITTING at my place, Ervinke and I, humming the Ivory Coast's national anthem under our breath, when as usual the phone goes suddenly and some guy asks is this the Stockyards, North. I say wrong number and hang up, but in a moment the phone rings again. Is this Stockyards, North. I tell the man testily that no, this is not Stockyards, North but in a moment...

"Wall," says Ervinke, "that's no solution," and he picks up the receiver himself and says: "Stockyards, North, here."

"Thank goodness," says the guy, "I want Mr. Salzboim, please."

"Salzboim?" says Ervinke. "He's no longer working for us."

"Why, what happened?"

"They got wise to him at last."

"No kidding?"

"What did you expect?" says Ervinke. "You didn't think it could last for ever, did you?"

"You bet I didn't," says the other joyfully. "I could see it coming a mile off."

"Too smart for his own good he was," says Ervinke. "Now they've kicked out the whole bunch."

Translated by Miriam Arad. By arrangement with "Ma'ariv."

PULL OUT AND KEEP PULL OUT AND KEEP PULL OUT AND KEEP PULL OUT AND KEEP PULL OUT AND KEEP PULL OUT AND KEEP PULL OUT AND

POST PULLOUT GUIDE

The Poster

THEATRE

All programmes are in Hebrew unless otherwise stated.

Jerusalem

ABOVE AND BEYOND — Actor Oded Teomi relates some of his mystical experiences and reads excerpts from famous plays and literary works. (Pargod Pocket Theatre, 94 Bezael, Saturday and Thursday at 8.30 p.m.)

BEHIND THE MASK — Evening of marionette theatre and mime: "Billy Doll," written by Dennis Silk, with Hadas Ofra and Hani Haliva. "The Meeting" with Tzvi Halperin. (Tzavia, 38 King George, tonight and Monday at 8.30 p.m.)

THE EMIGRANTS — About two men looking to the West, one with intellectual aspirations, the other with the idea of making money. (Khan, opposite Railway Station, Monday and Tuesday at 8.30 p.m.)

EQUUS — Peter Shaffer's famous play about the boy who gouged out the eyes of five horses, here after fabulous success all over the world. The staging by British director Peter James falls to generate the passion without which the play has little meaning. (Jerusalem Theatre, Sunday)

THE IDIOT — The Khan Theatre's production based on the book by Dostoyevsky. Translated and adapted by Ilan Ronen. (Belt Ha'am, 11 Bezael, Wednesday at 8.30 p.m.)

PLAFF: SOUVENIRS FROM A FAMILY ALBUM — The Khan's new production directed by Hillel Ne'eman is a tribute to the late actor Nephthali Yavin who wrote the script. Social satire with tragicomic elements. (Khan, opposite Railway Station, Saturday and Thursday at 8.30 p.m.)

TEMPORARY WEDDING — Comedy by the Lila Theatre, with Clary Amrani. (Binyoni Ha'ooma, 5 Shal Hall, Saturday at 9 p.m.)

VARIATIONS ON THE LONELINESS OF WOMAN — By Yisrael Chevroli. With Carmel Gai and Varda Ben-Khor. (Tzavia, 38 King George, Saturday and Thursday at 9 p.m.)

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF — A revival of Haim's great hit of several years back, with same cast, same director, Hy Kalus. Miriam Zohar plays the man-eating bitch, and Misha Asherov her hapless professor-husband. (Jerusalem Theatre, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at 9 p.m.)

Tel Aviv

ALL MY SONS — Arthur Miller's play about World War II war profiteers, produced by the Cameri Theatre. (Cameri, 101 Dizengoff, Sunday at 8.30 p.m.; Tuesday at 4 p.m.)

CARDS — Pantomime presented by the Haifa Theatre. (Tzavia, 30 Ibn Gvirol, Tuesday at 8.30 p.m.)

COME BACK LITTLE SHEBA — A Lila Theatre production of William Inge's play, directed by Binyamin Zemah. (Nahmani Hall, 4 Nahmani, Sunday at 8.30 p.m.; Beit Hahayal, Weismann and Pinkus, Tuesday at 8.30 p.m.)

THE EMIGRANTS — (Tzavia, 30 Ibn Gvirol, Thursday at 8.30 p.m.)

THE IDIOT — (Nahmani Hall, 4 Nahmani, Saturday at 8.30 p.m.)

THE ITALIAN STRAW HAT — A hilarious, musical French farce moving at dizzying speed, with dazzling set and costumes, guaranteed to keep everyone in stitches. A Habimah Theatre production. (Habimah's Large Hall, Saturday, Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday)

MOONCHILDREN — A group of American students in the Skiles, approaching the end of their course, wonder what the next stage in their lives will be. A Cameri Theatre production. (Cameri, 101 Dizengoff, Saturday)

THE NIGHT OF THE TWENTIETH — A Haifa Theatre production about the origins of the Holocaust. Tense drama, beautifully staged by Noli Chiklin. (Tzavia, 30 Ibn Gvirol, Saturday at 8.30 p.m. and 10 p.m.)

OTHERWISE ENGAGED — Comedy by Simon Gray. Directed by Hy Kalus. (Cameri, 101 Dizengoff, Monday through Thursday)

PLAFF: SOUVENIRS FROM A FAMILY ALBUM — (Tzavia, 30 Ibn Gvirol, Sunday at 8.30 p.m.)

RICHARD III — Shakespeare's historical play produced by the Habimah Theatre. (Habimah's Large Hall, Monday and Tuesday)

THE SEVENTH SEAL — By Ingmar Bergman, translated by Amira Polan and directed by Simha Factor. Performed by the Alternative Group. (Tzavia, 30 Ibn Gvirol, Monday at 9 p.m.)

THE TRAVELLING POET — Habimah Theatre production. (Habimah's Large Hall, Saturday)

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF — (Habimah Small Hall, Saturday)

Haifa

ALL MY SONS — (Shavit Theatre, 3 Haaport, Thursday)

BORN YESTERDAY — The Haifa Municipal Theatre's new production of Garson Kanin's play set in a plush Washington hotel in 1948, about a materialistic rogue who becomes a millionaire. (Haifa Municipal Theatre, 30 Poverner, Saturday through Thursday at 8.30 p.m.)

AN ISRAELI IN AMERICA — Satirical comedy written by Ellis Sagle about an Israeli seeking his fortune in America, with Ya'acov Bodo, Oshik Levi, Rachel Dayan, Shmuel Kalderson, Marina Rosal and Avi Hofman. Produced by the Lila Theatre. (Shavit Theatre, 3 Haaport, Saturday at 9 p.m.)

MIXED UP WORLD — Pantomime with Dani Lotat. (Lila Theatre, Beit Rothschild, tonight at 9.30)

TWELFTH NIGHT — (Beit Hahayal, Saturday at 8.30 p.m.)

Other Towns

COME BACK LITTLE SHEBA — (Dishon, Monday at 8.30 p.m.)

EQUUS — (Kiryat Gat, Monday)

THE IDIOT — (Beersheba, Olat, Monday at 9 p.m.)

AN ISRAELI IN AMERICA — (Hershtia David, tonight at 9.15; Kiryat Shmona, Shiner, Monday at 8.40 p.m.; Hadera, Hof, Wednesday at 8.30 p.m.)

THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA — Beersheba Theatre's production of Lorca's stark drama about five noble virgins shut up in the home of their mother, in an impressive production by housewife Yoram Falk. (Beersheba, Beit Ha'am, Saturday and Sunday)

KRIZA — The word means running amuck and the play is about the lives and problems of Israelis of Oriental origin. Produced by the Haifa Theatre. (Ma'lot, Sunday; Yifat, Monday and Tuesday; Olval Haim, Wednesday)

POPPER — Hanoah Levin's new play has all the same characters and situations as his previous ones, but is pure fun. The exponent of the tragic absurdity of life here seems to be playing a joke on himself. Produced by the Haifa Theatre. (Kfar Vitkin, Beit Ha'am, Wednesday at 9.15; Yagur, Yad Lebanim, Wednesday at 9 p.m.)

SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS — Commedia dell'arte by Goldoni produced by the Haifa Theatre. (Acro, Mahane Netesh, Sunday at 8.30 p.m.)

TEMPORARY WEDDING — (Beersheba, Chon, tonight at 9)

TWELFTH NIGHT — (Ein Hashofel, Sunday)

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF — (Kiryat Yam, Sunday)



Left to right, Laurence Olivier, Dustin Hoffman and Roy Schneider in John Schlesinger's thriller 'Marathon Man.'

ENTERTAINMENT

Jerusalem

ADAM AND HAVAI — Musical comedy by Yonatan Gefen. (Beit Ha'am, 11 Bezael, Monday at 8.30 p.m.)

EVENING OF JAZZ — Dan Gottfried, piano, Aaron Kaminsky, drums, Victor Ponomov, bass. (Pargod Pocket Theatre, 94 Bezael, Wednesday at 8.30 p.m.)

HAGASHASH HANIVER FESTIVAL — Jokes and skits with the Hagashash Haniver comedy trio. (Beit Ha'am, 11 Bezael, Saturday)

ISRAELI FOLKLORE — With the Hora dance group. (Khan, opposite Railway Station, Wednesday at 9 p.m.)

MUSICAFE — Singers and musicians from around the world. (Tzavia, 38 King George, Wednesday at 9 p.m.)

PEOPLE LIKE TO SING — With Ark Eintein, Yoni Reicher, Ephraim Shamir, Asar Shami, Shlomo Idor and the Netanya Orchestra. (Binyoni Ha'ooma, Saturday at 9 p.m.)

YOUR PEOPLE ARE MINE — Pop musical based on the Book of Ruth. In English. (Yakna Auditorium, King David St., Saturday at 8.15 p.m.)

Tel Aviv

BONFIRE — Jokes and skits with Dudu Dotan. (Beit Dor Theatre, 30 Beit Dor, tonight at midnight; Heichal Hatarbut, Wednesday)

HELLO SONG — With Shlomo Artzi. (Teach-nim, tonight at midnight)

LA BOHEME — (Shavit Theatre, 3 Haaport, tonight at 9.30)

MY COUNTRY, I'VE RIDICULED YOU — (Ora Theatre, 41 Hara, tonight at 9.30)

PEOPLE LIKE TO SING — (Haifa Auditorium, Sunday at 9 p.m.)

THE ISRAELI NATIONAL OPERA — All productions by Ellis De Philippis: Kaiman: The Emigrants (Tel Aviv, Saturday and Sunday at 8.15 p.m.; Petah Tikva, Shalom, Monday at 8 p.m.; Rehovot, Beit Ha'am, Wednesday at 9 p.m.)

NATASHA TADSON — piano — Works by Beethoven, Chopin (Tel Aviv Museum, Saturday)

HOLON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA — Mendi Rodan conducting. Works by Mozart, Fred Kaufman, Respighi, Shostakovich. (Tel Aviv Museum, Tuesday)

BORIS BERMAN — Piano works by Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert. (Tel Aviv Museum, Thursday)

HAIFA

ISRAELI PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA — Anil Dorati conducting works by Bartok. (Haifa Auditorium, Series 1: Tuesday, Series 2: Wednesday, Series 3: Thursday)

THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE

FOR CHILDREN

SEVEN IN ONE SWOOP — Play by the Beersheba Theatre. (Tel Aviv, Beit Hahayal, Weismann and Pinkus, Friday, Sunday and Monday)

OPERA

THE ISRAELI NATIONAL OPERA — All productions by Ellis De Philippis: Kaiman: The Emigrants (Tel Aviv, Saturday and Sunday at 8.15 p.m.; Petah Tikva, Shalom, Monday at 8 p.m.; Rehovot, Beit Ha'am, Wednesday at 9 p.m.)

DANCE

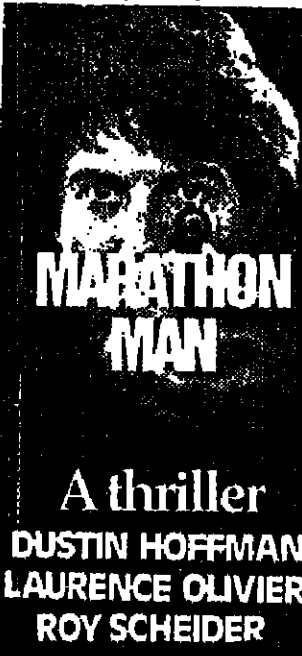
THE BATSHEVA DANCE COMPANY — Variations (Yakov Shorin; Shony Concerto (John Cranko); Album Leaves (Donald Mackie). (Jerusalem Theatre, Saturday)

In case of last minute changes in times of performances, or where times are not available, please contact Box Office.

Tel Aviv Cinemas

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ALLENBY Tel. 57820
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4 Shows



MARATHON MAN

A thriller
DUSTIN HOFFMAN
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ALAIN DELON
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FIGHT TO THE DEATH!



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A NEW WORLD PICTURE
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ERNEST LUBITSCH'S
outstanding suspense comedy

TO BE OR NOT TO BE
CAROLE LOMBARD
HENRY
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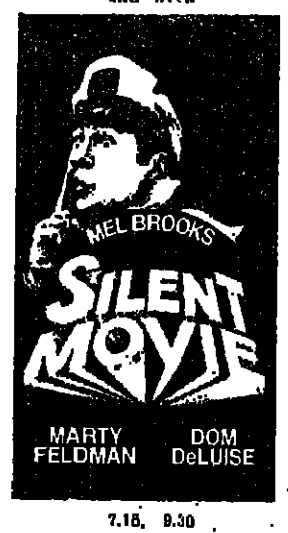
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In German at 4.30 p.m.
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MARTY FELDMAN
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It isn't always an invitation to a kiss.
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CHRIS SARANDON
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A romantic comedy

A MOVIE AND BREAKFAST



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ISRAELI PREMIERE
Sat. Feb. 12, 1977
For adults only
Israel's first underground
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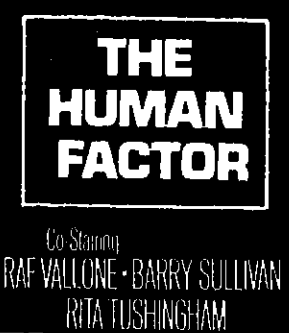


THE BLACK BANANA
OREN Tel. 282288
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Is the world convinced that terrorists must not be appeased?

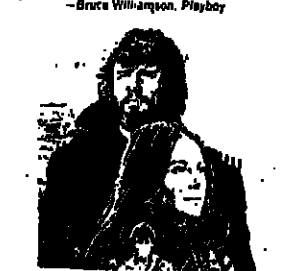
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10, 12, 2, 4, 7.15, 9.30
Love of a woman...
Prayer to a God...
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in a great new Israeli comedy
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There is nothing more daring than a gentle man pushed too far...
ROBERT CULP
NO SVENSON
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La tete de Normande
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THE MAGIC FLUTE
Sat. and all weeks: 7.15, 9.15
Only Sun. at 4.30:
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LOVER BOY
EWIGE JENSON
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Ramat Gan Cinemas

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THE PINK PANTHER STRIKES AGAIN

HADAR Tel. 728822
A Movie and Breakfast
MIKI KAM
DORON TAVORI
English subtitles

ORDEA Tel. 721720
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The Sailor Who Fell From Grace With the Sea
with
SARAH MILES
KRIS KRISTOFFERSON
7.15, 9.30

OASIS 2nd week
GEORGE KENNEDY
JOHN MILLS
THE HUMAN FACTOR
4, 7.15, 9.30

Petah Tikva
SHALOM
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Sat. & Wed. at 7.30 only
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Netanya
ESTHER
A Movie and Breakfast
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Jerusalem Cinemas

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MARATHON MAN
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Comedy about the love life of a Cop
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CHRIS CHRISTOPHERSON
SARA MILES
THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA
Beautiful People
7—9.15

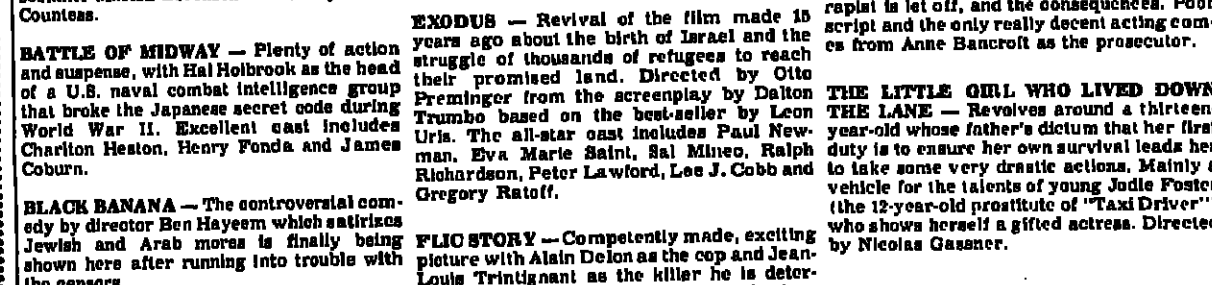


Religious woman finds black bra offensive in Ben-Hayem's controversial film 'Black Banana.'

FILMS IN BRIEF
ALL THE PRESIDENTS MEN — Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman star as "Washington Post" reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein who were instrumental in uncovering the facts behind the Watergate break-in which led to the toppling of Nixon. Fact here is more intriguing and more suspenseful than fiction.
DOCTOR ZHIVAGO — Re-issue of Eila Kazan's 1966 adaptation of Pasternak's novel set in the lives of natural, unpretentious people and their interdependence, with the search for love as a subsidiary theme. With James Dean, Julie Harris and Raymond Massey.
EXODUS — Revival of the film made 15 years ago about the birth of Israel and the struggle of thousands of refugees to reach their promised land. Directed by Otto Preminger from the screenplay by Dalton Trumbo based on the best-selling novel by Leon Uris. The all-star cast includes Paul Newman, Eva Marie Saint, Sal Mineo, Ralph Richardson, Peter Lawford, Lee J. Cobb and Gregory Ratoff.
FLIC STORY — Competently made, exciting picture with Alain Delon as the cop and Jean-Louis Trintignant as the killer he is determined to capture. Based on a true life story recounted by the Inspector in charge of the case some 26 years later. Directed by Jacques Deray ("Borsalino"). Bilingual example of the genre. French dialogue.
THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVED DOWN THE LANE — Revolves around a thirteen-year-old whose father's dictum that her first duty is to ensure her own survival leads her to take some very drastic actions. Mainly a vehicle for the talents of young Jodie Foster (the 12-year-old prostitute of "Taxi Driver") who shows herself a gifted actress. Directed by Nicolas Gassner.
THE LITTLE PRINCESS — Shirley Temple as a poor Victorian girl, in Walter Lang's 1939 production.
(Continued on page H)

FOR PETE'S SAKE — Barbara Streisand doing her best to earn a living for her husband (Michael Sarrazin) and gets a few laughs in the process.
MR. KLEIN — Psychological thriller about a man in Paris in 1942 burdened with a Jewish name, and police-wanted namesake, whom he attempts to hunt down — but his fate is sealed. Jeanne Moreau appears as mistress to the elusive other Mr. Klein.
LIPSTICK — about a photographic model (Margaux Hemingway) who is beaten and raped by her sister's (Perry King) music teacher, the subsequent trial where the script is let off, and the consequences. Poor as the only really decent acting comes from Anne Bancroft as the prosecutor.

THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA — A neophyte being introduced to the Mikus ritual in 'Black Banana.'



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WHAT'S ON

Notices are accepted for this column at the rate IL14.04 per line including VAT; publication daily over a period of a month costs IL27.60 per line including VAT. Ads are accepted at offices of The Jerusalem Post and at all recognized advertising agencies.

Plant a Tree in Israel with Your Own Hands: free tour for planters to the Hills of Judea every Monday and Wednesday from Jerusalem and every Tuesday from Tel Aviv. For details and registration please call Victoria Department: Keren Kayemet LeIsrael (Jewish National Fund) in Jerusalem, King George Ave., corner Rehov Keren Kayemet, Tel. 02-35201. In Tel Aviv, 86 Rehov Hayarkon, opp. Dan Hotel, Tel. 02-334466.

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1. Medical Centre at 9.30 a.m., 11.00 a.m., 12.15 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. Last tour on Friday at 12.15 p.m. Kennedy Building. No charge. Buses 19 and 27.
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Hebrew University, tours in English at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. from Administration Building, Givat Ram Campus, Mount Scopus tour 11.30 a.m. from the Martin Buber Building, Buses 9 and 26. School of Education bus stop. Further details: Tel. 39450.
American Mitzvah Women, Quest Tours — Jerusalem — Tel. 621068, 222646.
Tourists and Visitors come and see the General Israel Orphan Home for Girls, Jerusalem, and its manifold activities and

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THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1977

Passover

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a romantic opera by Karl Maria von Weber
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JERUSALEM — Beit Agron, 37 Rehov Hillel

Tuesday, February 15, at 6.00 p.m.

Admission tickets (IL2.—) at Cabana, Rehov Herbert Samuel.

Beit Belgia and the Israel-Belgium Society, Jerusalem
invite you to a showing of

De Komst van Joachim Stiller

(The Arrival of Joachim Stiller)
a colour video-film based on the novel
by Hubert Lampo, produced by Henry Kumel

Dutch spoken, no subtitles
Monday, February 14, 7.00 p.m.

at the Mishkenot Sha'ananim Music Centre
Presented by the Consulate General of Belgium

israel film archive · jerusalem cinematheque

Fri., 11/2, 2.00 p.m.: CE QUE SAVAIENT MORGAN — Luc Béraud
LA SOLITUDE DU CHANTREUR DE FOND — Yves Montand by Chris Marker
Sat., 12/2, 7.00 p.m.: VINCENT, FRANÇOIS, PAUL... ET LES AUTRES — Claude Sautou
PARFUM — MY LOVELY — Dick Richards
Sun., 13/2, 7.00 p.m.: LE TRAIN — Pierre Granier-Deferre
Mon., 14/2, 7.00 p.m.: An Evening with Marcel Carne
LE JOUR DE LEVY
Tue., 15/2, 7.00 p.m.: Meeting with the Director
LES ENFANTS DU PARADIS
Wed., 16/2, 7.00 p.m.: QUEEN KELLY — Erich von Stroheim
THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES — Billy Wilder

All French. Filmed with English subtitles.
Tickets to non-members — 15 minutes before screening only.

Lunching in the sun

BILL OF FARE

WHEN A COLD wind blows in Jerusalem, the residents of the capital have the choice of retreating to their often insufficiently heated homes — or seeking out the warm breezes of Jericho.

There, along the road leading to the excavations of the ancient city, are a number of garden restaurants, each with its decorative fountain, brilliantly coloured flowers, and swings for the kiddies. Our party of four (who would be so selfish as to go to Jericho with a half-empty car?) chose the Al Khayyam at random.

We picked a table which was half in the sun and half covered by the shade of an orange tree. A very pleasant young waiter brought menus and subsequently took our order for *mezze* (assorted hors d'oeuvres) and a bottle of white Cremlan wine.

After a rather longish wait, he came back with a brimming tray, holding 28 small dishes, each with a different tidbit. The dishes included regulars — hummus and eggplant salad — and such novelties as tehina with what

seemed to be horseradish greens, and a parsley salad with walnut paste.

Also present were three types of whole beans, assorted salted seeds and three types of potato salad. A number of mixtures were based on cheese and yoghurt.

We leisurely made our way through this assortment, managing to polish off everything but a few olives. Naturally, the plentitude resulted in our finishing the bottle of wine and ordering another. While we were eating a kibbutz tour came in for soft drinks. We knew they were kibbutzniks because they left their rubbish neatly packed in plastic bags.

For our main course, we ordered shishlik, kebab, "oriental roast chicken" and kufita in tehina sauce. The best of the dishes was the kebab, chopped mutton grilled until crisp over a charcoal fire. The kebab was very nicely

seasoned with cinnamon and allspice, as well as the usual onion, garlic and parsley. The kufita (meat balls) were made of the same mixture, but the tehina in which they were baked detracted, rather than added.

The chicken had the advantage of being a true "village" fowl, which had never seen the inside of a mass-produced poultry run. It was grilled with plenty of onion and then baked over a pit, which thus had the opportunity to soak up all the schmaltz. A little chewy, but tasty.

The shishlik, unfortunately, came from too old a sheep and was thus very tough indeed. It was the least satisfactory of our choices.

Luckily, there were no desserts and we had to content ourselves with picking a few oranges off the tree above us. The coffee, as might be expected, was excellent.

The bill for four, including two bottles of wine, came to IL23, or about IL1.60 per couple. Naturally, if two people came by themselves, they might want to order a more restricted first course. □ H.L.S.

DINING OUT

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Jewish Quarter, view. Top of stairs above Hotel Kosher, Dalry.

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Israel Theatres

The Cameri Theatre
MOONCHILDREN
Tomorrow, Feb. 12,
Mon., Feb. 21

ALL MY SONS
Sun., Feb. 13, Tue., Feb. 23

OTHERWISE ENGAGED
Mon., Feb. 14, Tue., Feb. 15
Wed., Feb. 16, Thurs., Feb. 17

EQUUS
Jerusalem, Feb. 15,
Kiryat Gat, Feb. 14

Habima
THE ITALIAN STRAW HAT
Tomorrow, Feb. 12,
Sun., Feb. 13

VIRGINIA WOOLF
(8 p.m.)
Tomorrow, Feb. 13, Small Hall

ROBERTO III
Mon., Feb. 14, Tue., Feb. 16

THE TRAVELLING FOOT
Habima, tomorrow, Feb. 13

Beer-Sheva Municipal Theatre
THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA
Tomorrow, Feb. 12,
Sun., Feb. 13

IN Beer-Sheva
TELEVISION NIGHT
Tomorrow, Feb. 12,
Beit Habayal, Haifa

Mon., Feb. 13, Beit Habayal, Haifa
Mon., Feb. 21, Nahmani, Tel Aviv

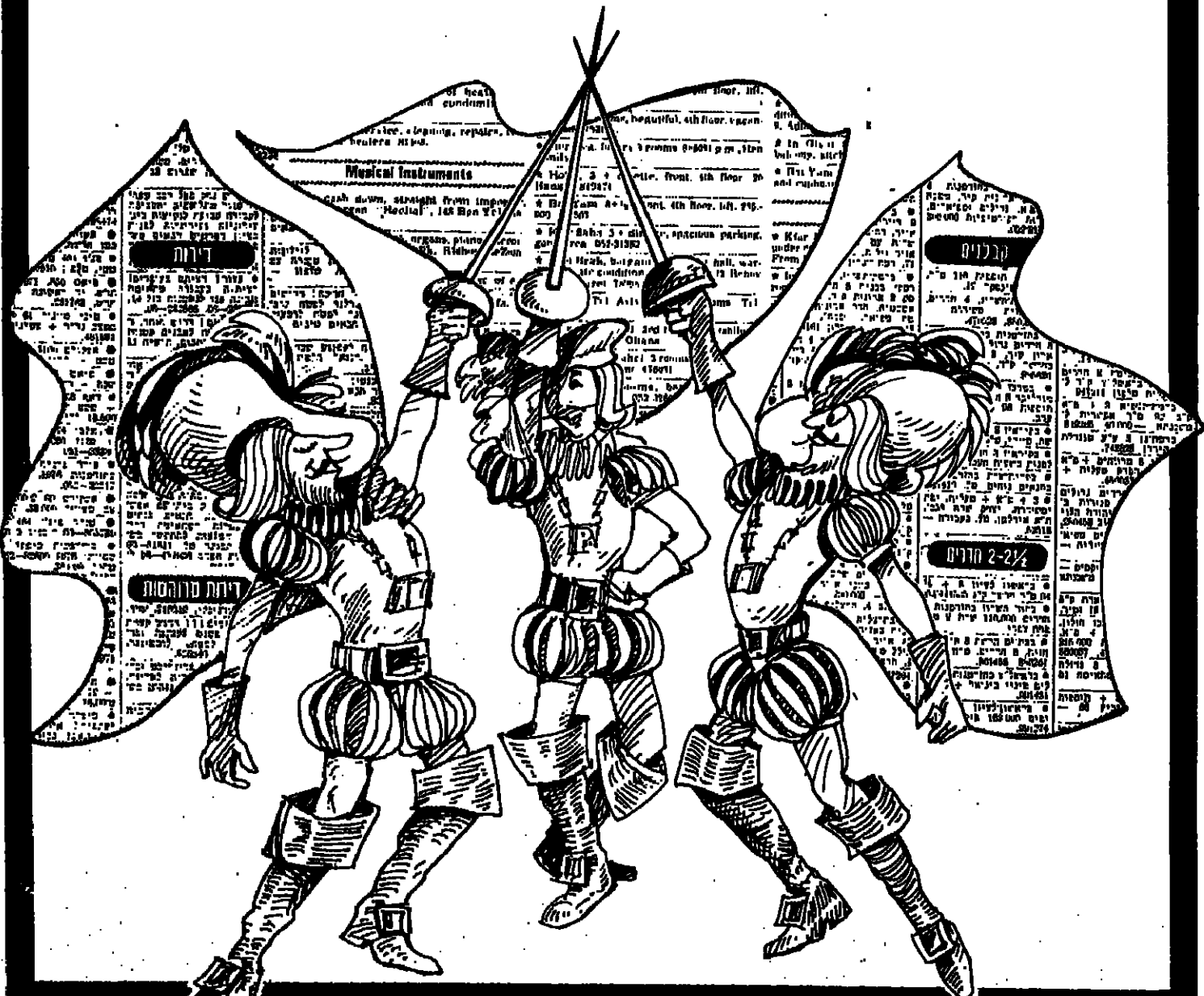
THE EGG STORY
Mon., Feb. 14, Beer-Sheva

כנסים מן האמל

THE MIGHTY COMBINATION

Classified advertisements for publication on Friday in Hebrew and English can be handed in any day to any approved advertising agency or directly to an office of Haluah Hakaful, so as to reach the main office of Haluah Hakaful by the Wednesday evening preceding publication.

All advertisements so handed in will be translated into English and will appear on Friday in The Jerusalem Post, in addition to publication in Yediot Aharonot and Haaretz!!



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IN COOPERATION WITH

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THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE

FILMS IN BRIEF

(Continued from page 6)

THE LOST HONOUR OF KATHARINA BLUM — Political thriller about journalistic character assassination, based on Heinrich Böll's recent bestseller. The victim is a reserved young woman who's had a brief amorous association with a wanted radical. Political overtones are somewhat confusing.

LOVE AND ANARCHY — Set mainly in an Italian brothel of the Thirties where a young country lad (Giancarlo Giannini) falls in love with a whore and his plans to assassinate Mussolini never materialize. Uneven in quality but full of vitality with some fine moments. Directed by Lina Wertmüller.

THE MAGIC FLUTE — Ingmar Bergman's adaptation of the Mozart opera takes a number of liberties with the original text but is mostly a joy, full of sparkle and steaming the fairy-tale quality of the complicated allegory of the fight between good and evil. Musical performance and acting are of high standard. Not to be missed.

MARATHON MAN — Ultra-violent thriller based on the best-selling book by William Goldman. About a Jewish student who becomes the innocent victim of a crime organized by a Nazi war criminal. Directed by John Schlesinger, with Lawrence Olivier and Dustin Hoffman.

THE PINK PANTHER STRIKES AGAIN — Peter Sellers is great as Chief Inspector Clouseau saving the world, but the script writers run out of ideas in the third of the series about the incompetent but lucky French detective.

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE — Release of the 1955 classic study of youth on the rampage with James Dean playing a juvenile delinquent and Natalie Wood his girlfriend.

THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA — A kind of inverted fairy tale for adults, with a lot of sex and a child's-eye view of events. The film is weird and silly at times, but the beautifully photographed wild sea-coast, the harpist, idealistic, Nietzschean children, and a hot siren-sailor romance, merge slowly together.

SILENT MOVIE — Truly silent, not a word spoken in this hysterical comedy directed by Mel Brooks who also stars as a director trying to make a silent movie in Hollywood. Mad goings on with his buddies Marty Feldman and Dom DeLuise.

TAXI DRIVERS — Frustration and loneliness lead to violence, as a psychopath-taxi driver (Robert De Niro) becomes a murderer. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Screenplay by Paul Schrader.

LA TÊTE DE NORMANDE ST. ONGE — French-Canadian, Brechtian, horror show, with a circus of misfits looking each others' wounds in a condemned house. There is one particularly explicit sex scene.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE — Release of Ernst Lubitsch's 1943 black comedy about an acting troupe which got involved in international affairs in wartime Poland. Starring Jack Benny and Carol Lombard. Witty and acting still impact making. A re-issue well worth seeing.

LE VIEUX FUSIL — Set in the French provinces in 1944 as the Germans retreat before the Allied forces, the film recounts a doctor's (Philippe Noiret) revenge for the slaughter of his family and friends. Fine script, marred by excessive brutality.

YANKEE DOODLE DANDY — Recreation of George M. Cohan's life with fine cast headed by James Cagney. An enjoyable musical.

SPECIAL FILM SHOWINGS

ANN OF THE THOUSAND DAYS — (Jerusalem Theatre, Thursday at 8.30 p.m.)

ONE OAFS — Short Israeli films directed by Ely Shragenheim. (Jerusalem, Pargod Pocket Theatre, 94 Bezalet, Tuesday at 8.30)

MY MICHAEL — Impressive screen version of Amos Oz's best-seller, with director Dan Wolman succeeding in catching the novel's lyrical quality. Set in 1950's Jerusalem, this tragic story tells of a young husband and wife who drift apart through lack of communication. Beautiful performances from Eilat Lavie and Oded Kotler, in one of the best Israeli films to date. (Jerusalem Theatre, today at 8.)

SHAMPOO — Social comedy with Warren Beatty as an amorous hairdresser and Grant Tinker as his mistress. The parts are better than the whole but there are enough bright moments to make the film worth seeing. (Jerusalem Khan, opposite Railway Station, tonight at 9 and 11.30)

THE SILENCE — By Ingmar Bergman with Ingrid Tulin. Two sisters in a love-hate relationship. A journey in a strange and hostile city. The film contains the seed of the idea which produced "Cries and Whispers." (Jerusalem, Israel Museum, Tuesday at 8 and 8.30 p.m.)

ONE DAY, at noon, a car stopped in the centre of the small town of N., in the district of M., and from it emerged a man, neither old nor young, neither fat nor thin, honest-looking, wearing glasses and a suit — in short, an average man, who wouldn't normally attract the slightest attention.

He stopped the first person who passed by and asked if there was a hotel in town. The youth replied that there was the "Darom". It was not too expensive, he said, and since there were so few guests, one could bargain over the price.

The stranger thanked him and drove to the hotel, a sleepy, two-storey building of 10 or 12 rooms. There, the hotelier said that the daily rate was IL85 for bed and breakfast. The guest not only didn't bargain but asked to pay for a week in advance. The hotelier, slightly surprised, concealed his joy and asked for the guest's identity card in order to register him in the directory, according to regulations. When he looked at the identity card, he smiled to himself and said:

"Chechekov?"

"Yes, David."

"Russian, right?"

"No, I'm from here."

"Chechekov, that's a funny name," said the hotelier.

"Unusual."

"It's an old name in these parts."

The proprietor presented a bill for IL 895. The guest examined it and said:

"You have to add VAT to this, IL8, if I'm not mistaken."

After a moment's silence, the proprietor said: "Of course," and added IL8 to the bill.

After the guest had paid, the proprietor took his suitcase and went with him to his room on the second floor. The guest himself carried an attaché-case. One of the windows faced the street and the other a parched landscape.

Before he left, the proprietor asked: "You're here on business?"

"Yes, business," said the guest.

"Private or government?"

"Yes, more or less," the guest replied.

THERE ARE about 10,000 inhabitants in the town of N., and most of the shops can be found in its U-shaped centre. There are also four or five restaurants, two coffee houses, a cinema, and an assortment of refreshment, odd-ends and garinim stalls.

Mr. Chechekov walked up and down the row of shops two or three times, stopping to examine the shop windows, and glancing at the passersby; finally, he went into a clothing shop.

He chose two shirts — one plaid and one yellow — and a blue tie with red polka dots. He put them on the counter and asked for the bill.

"How's business?" he asked, while paying IL178 plus IL4 VAT.

"Not so good," said the shopkeeper. "You're not from around here, are you?"

"No, I'm here for just a few days."

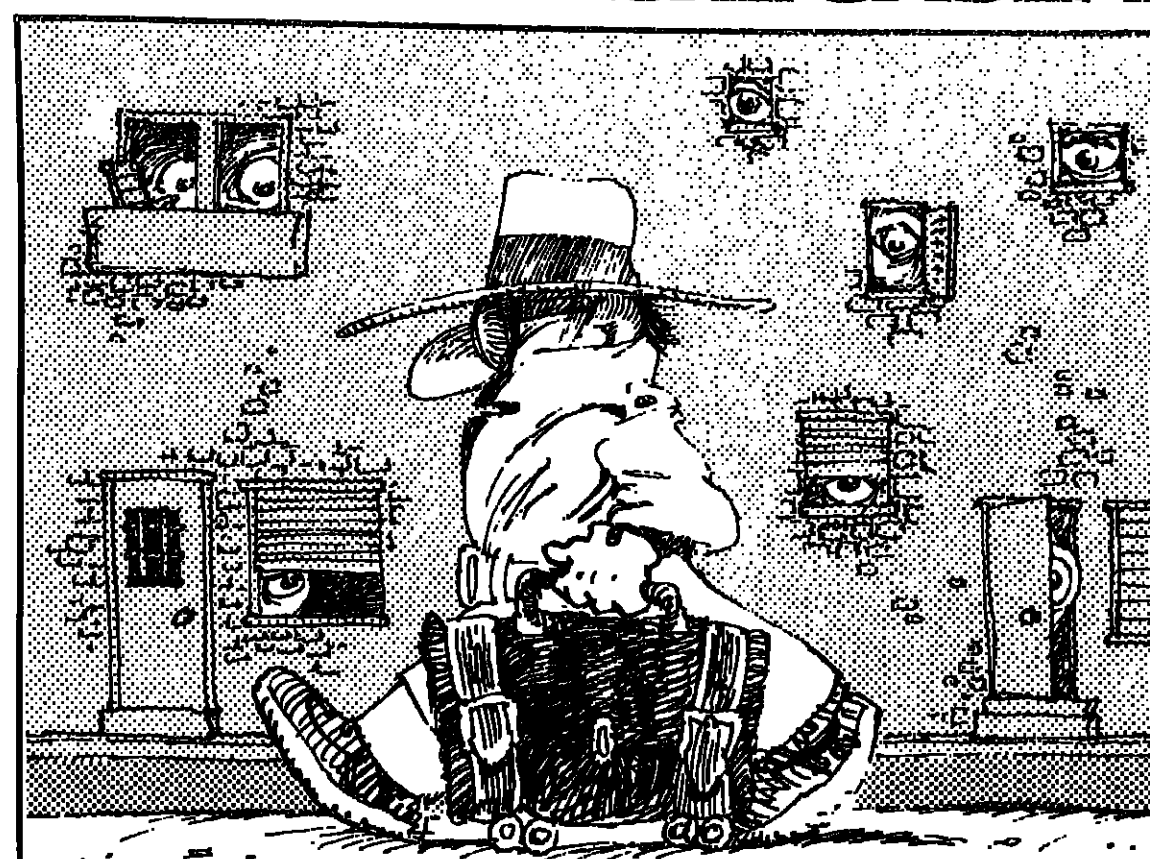
"Well it's pretty bad. A lot of welfare cases, people don't earn too much, and what I've left goes in taxes. Business tax, local tax, income tax."

"Yes, it's like that everywhere," said Mr. Chechekov.

He opened his attaché-case, put in his receipt, took his package and left.

He then went to the souvenir shop next door. The shopkeeper suggested a jewelled necklace, a vase from Afghanistan, a copper menorah, a Beduin bracelet, a cuckoo clock. But Mr. Chechekov

THE MAN WITH THE BLACK ATTACHE CASE/1



Dick Rodon

2/77

chose a gold-plated cigarette lighter, inquired about the price, did not bargain, and asked for a receipt.

"A receipt?" smirked the salesman.

"Yes, a receipt, and don't forget the VAT."

The salesman stared at him for a while; the smile froze on his face; finally he said: "I understand," and wrote out a receipt.

Mr. Chechekov opened the attaché-case, put in the lighter and the receipt, and left.

Mr. Chechekov then went to the garinim stall and brought 200 grammes of peanuts and 200 grammes of roasted almonds and got a receipt for IL8.50. He then proceeded to the cosmetics shop, where he bought five lipsticks and got a receipt for IL78.50. From there, he went to the newspaper stand, bought a copy of Time, and got a receipt for IL5. When evening came, he went to a restaurant and had a meal; it cost IL22.30, including VAT.

Next morning, after having a bite to eat, he drove his car to a garage. He complained that there was a "strange noise" when he changed the gears and that the car took a long time to start in the morning. The mechanic wrote all this down and told him to come back in three hours.

Mr. Chechekov then went to the barber's shop. He had a haircut and a shave and was given a receipt for IL42. Since he had a toothache, he asked where he could find a dentist.

He sat in the dentist's waiting-room for an hour before going into the "torture chamber," where the dentist examined both his upper and lower jaws and announced that Chechekov needed three fillings and a new crown. And a general cleaning wouldn't hurt.

"But I'll only be here for a few days," said Mr. Chechekov.

"Ah, you're not from here...well, then, we'll give you some emergency treatment for

that aching tooth, maybe we'll even manage to get a temporary filling in there."

The dentist drilled, picked, filed, smeared, anaesthetized, drilled again, and filled the tooth.

"Five hundred and thirty lirot," he said, as Chechekov stepped down from the chair.

"Does that include VAT," asked Chechekov.

"That's OK it's included, don't worry," grinned the dentist, generously.

A CITIZEN'S DIARY

Aharon Megged

"Give me a receipt, please."

The dentist stared at him, hesitated for a moment, and then sat at his desk and began to write.

"Name?"

"Chechekov, David."

The dentist stopped short, glanced at the patient standing behind him, and said:

"Chechekov, that's a familiar name..."

"Could be..."

"Wait a minute...Aren't you...?" the dentist gazed at him in wonder. He squirmed in his chair, shrugged his shoulders, and said:

"Actually, the filling is temporary and so are you. I mean, you're just a visitor here — so I'll only charge you IL230 and that includes VAT. Enjoy yourself."

The dentist handed over the receipt with a gesture of noble munificence.

Chechekov placed the receipt in his attaché-case, walked away, and headed towards the real estate agent's office.

When he sat before the agent — a young, energetic, smooth-talking man in his twenties — he inquired about purchasing a two-bedroom flat, with a large living room, in a quiet and pleasant neighbourhood.

"In approximately what price range?"

"Price is no object. But I have to like it."

"I'll find you something nice," said the agent, who looked his office and steered Chechekov to his spacious, air-conditioned, push-button Chevrolet.

The agent showed him several flats. But none of them was good enough for Chechekov.

"Perhaps you'd be interested in a villa?" said the young man finally. "I have a really nice villa for you. It belongs to a family that's going back to America. Just between you and me, it'll be a cinch to get them to lower the price, since they've got only a week left to sell. They've already got their plane tickets. You can get it for only 800,000 and even for less if you pay in dollars."

Chechekov wrapped himself in a blanket of silence. A giant dog greeted them from the garden as they approached the villa. The two of them inspected all the rooms with the owners of the house. Chechekov carefully checked each room, each gadget, each closet, asked a few questions, and said that he'd think it over and give them an answer by the end of the week.

At noon, when he reached the garage, the owner presented him with a bill for IL2,382. When Chechekov examined it, he noticed that they had changed his carburettor, clutch, spark plugs, filter, and ignition.

"You're lucky you came when you did," said the owner. "If you had continued driving the car in that condition you'd have ended up in the hospital or even worse."

"May I have a signed, stamped receipt, please?" said Chechekov.

"We don't work with receipts here," grinned the owner. "We give them only for spare parts, if you insist."

"I also want one for the labour, and please don't forget to add VAT."

"If your company's paying for it, what do you care? It's no skin off their back."

"I'm paying for it. Please write out a receipt."

"I'll cost you another 520 pounds."

"I don't mind."

By the third day, rumours were spreading throughout the town that the stranger, who was filling his attaché-case with tens and even hundreds of receipts, was some kind of inspector.

But what kind of inspector? And for whom was he working? There were some who said that he was from internal revenue, others said he was from the Interior Ministry, or the Ministry of Tourism, or the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Some even thought that he had been sent by private investigators to collect information about the economic offences committed in the town, so that the offenders could be brought to court, and it was only a matter of time before everything came out into the open.

Nevertheless, as long as our hero was walking around town with his black attaché-case, going in and out of shops, sitting at cafes, strolling along the streets, saying very little and only answering "yes" or "no" when spoken to, everyone began to write and give receipts for every little thing from shoelaces to half a portion of *leftef*.

A mountain of receipts piled up in the town and the scratching of ballpoint pens drowned the laughter and chatter of women and children.

A week after Chechekov's arrival, when it became known that he had paid for another week's accommodation in advance, a delegation of three — representing all the shopkeepers, businessmen, craftsmen, and other self-employed people who couldn't stand it any longer — was sent to the head of the town council, Mr. Heshvan, with the following message:

"Where will it all end? You know how tight our financial situation is, we can barely keep our heads above water — and now we have to give out a receipt for every little thing, and write it in the books, and pay taxes on it. What are you going to do about it? When are you going to get rid of this public nuisance who is putting us all into hook?"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen, I understand," said Mr. Heshvan, as he rose from his chair. "Thank you! Thank you! Just as you have been able to put your trust in me in the past, I hope that you will be able to count on me in the future. Thank you!"

So the very next day, bright and early, Mr. Heshvan rang up the hotel and said in the sweetest of tones:

"Mr. Chechekov? I'm Mr. Heshvan, the head of the town council. I'm sorry that I haven't had the chance to meet you yet. I hear that you're planning to settle in our little town. Welcome! Welcome! Why don't you come to see me? I've heard so much about you, you know what they say, seeing is believing...Shall we say in about an hour? An hour and a half?...No, there's no need to bother, I'll come to pick you up. It'll be my pleasure. Mr. Chechekov."

Two hours later, when Mr. Chechekov was sitting in Mr. Heshvan's office, he said to himself: "I've been waiting for this moment."

But have patience, dear reader, for we shall only know what Mr. Chechekov was really waiting for next week. □

Translated by Yehudi Tobin
By arrangement with "Davar"

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1977

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1977

THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE

PAGE ELEVEN

הכזה מן האשל

THE thousand-and-one definitions of poetry are all built around the central truth that "a poem should not mean, but be." A poem about a nightingale evokes not only the nightingale but his song; the artistic process, in other words, is so intense that it heightens experience as well as sensibility and distills them in a single poetic line.

Translating poetry is a task to be performed by poets; otherwise the poetry is lost. The Talmud tells us that he "who translates a verse literally is false to the original"; thus, to know the meaning of words is not to know their value, either in the one language or the other. If the creator, as Eliot says, must continually surrender himself, even more insistently, must the re-creator. The poet absorbs knowledge not to display it but to concentrate it; in his turn, the translator absorbs and catalyzes his knowledge and the poet's.

The translators of these poems by 14 Israeli poets have barked to the words of the Talmud; they speak in an authentic voice. Before me is "Isaac," by Amir Gilboa, as translated in this volume by A.C. Jacobs and as translated elsewhere (and otherwise):

I am the slain one, my son,
My blood is already on the leaves.
And my father held back his voice
And his face was pale.

And I wanted to cry out, struggling
in unbelief,
Tearing at my eyes,
And I woke.

And there was no power in my right hand.

And the other versifier:

It is I who am slaughtered, my son,
And my blood is already on the leaves.
Father's voice choked.
His face grew pale.

And I wanted to scream,
writhing not to believe
And I opened my eyes wide
And I awoke.

Bloodless was my right hand.

TEST THE difference in rhythm between the anguished dactyls and the plodding, even mundane, spondee. Punctuation itself plays a part, because Jacobs puts a comma after "And I woke," so that the pain of the right hand's powerlessness is one with waking, may in fact be the eye-opener, whereas the second translator's full stop adds the last line of its urgency. It should be noted, to revert to the Talmud's warning, that "bloodless" is what the Hebrew literally says.

The difference throughout in poetic idiom bespeaks the difference in background, experience, and concern of the poets. At dramatic variance, for instance, is the work of Abba Kovner, born in 1918 in Lithuania, and that of Shlomo Zamir, born 11 years later in Baghdad. In the poem-cycle, *My Little Sister*, Kovner writes, out of a youth death-grey and weary:

You have not seen a city thrust
on its back
like a horse in its blood, jerking
its hooves
unable to rise.

Christina is lame. She opens her
day
with a murmur of eyelashes.

Authentic voice



Amir Gilboa



Abba Kovner



Zelma



Yehuda Amichai

FOURTEEN ISRAELI POETS, Edited by Dennis Silk, London, Andre Deutsch, 96 pp. £2.25.

Evelyn Strouse

Like a dove alarmed from its nest,
Suzanne is alien. If not to the mother of god,
then to herself.
When there's a tolling to prayer
from the tower,
her head flinches unknowingly
as from a whip.

This is not translation but transmutation. Impressions articulated with no dictionary interference.

Zamir, on the other hand, sometimes seems to write with Blake's rural pen:

Under the poplars silence
stands with
a finger against her lips.

The violet sky is
low so that a child standing
on tiptoe can
tear a handkerchief from a
violet cloud.
I sit, and wait for the stars to rise.

American readers will hear an echo of e.e. cummings and know that Zamir has come to literary life under poetic influences quite different from Kovner's, whose verses recall the times and especially the hounding of Blok and Mayakovsky.

YEHUDA AMICHAH, perhaps the most widely known of this country's poets, was born in Ger-

And yet he is as crisp and timely as today's newspaper:
The mediators, the peace-makers, the conciliators
Live in the white house
And receive their nourishment
from afar.

Through oblique channels,
through dark veins, like an embryo.

He is the very archetype of an Israeli (or a poet), combining the immemorial ancient with the unforgettable new.

ZELDA, last-namess, and Avot Yeshurun both grew up in Russia and emigrated to Israel in 1925. Yeshurun's poetry is denser, richer in allusion and metaphor, but indebted, like Zelda's, to the Bible, allied, like hers, to the land. Sometimes they seem to be dipping their pens into the same ink-well. Zelda says:

In the dry riverbed
barefoot desire
trumpets to the heat wave
with a horn of gold.

Only the jasmine
whitens
in the dark,

And Cain's eye flashes fire.
Women faint from sweet scents
and hot fear.

And Yeshurun:
Yeh' bless us
In the Middle East.
Not a man with us
In the Middle East.

The Jews who are deep
in boot leather,
As they move from place
to place, swearing.

Those boots
That allured your going.
May they be worthy the infiltration
Dedicate, of the poem.

IN HIS instructive and therefore too brief introduction, Harold Schimmel says that Israeli geography depends on which way you are looking and whether you can see the sand beneath the superficial layers of modernity. The only constant in this shifting landscape of near-eastern near-westernizing has been the language, and the language is the Bible's.

The task of the poet writing in Hebrew, then, has been to add not a vocabulary but a dimension to the biblical language, the dimension of himself. He has had to express his own vision, belief, yearning with the ancient words but in the modern manner; he has had to make a covenant with technology. The strings of David's lyre can be heard among the gutters.

The translators keep faith with both instruments, never letting the infinite verbal variety of English, like Joseph's coat, cover the nakedness of the Hebrew, never allowing the poem to slip out either of its past or its present.

If there is any quibble about this remarkable volume it is editorial: the poems are arranged alphabetically according to the names of the poets, so that Dalia Ravikovitch, say, born in Ramat Gan in 1936, immediately follows Bert Pomerantz, born in Poland in 1902; there is no transition.

The poems need not be read in the order ordained by the editor, but read they must be. Some ring pure like a bell on a windless night; some trudge heavily laden; all intensely perception and rekindle memory. □

Mortimer holds forth

TRY ANYTHING ONCE by Raymond Mortimer. London, Hamish Hamilton, 234 pp. £6.95.

Aviva Even-Paz

BELLES-LETTRES has become a pejorative term of late, implying that anyone engaged in writing essays must be dilettante, if not downright effete. Hazlitt and Lamb were, in their time, names to be conjured with. I myself remember when Robert Lynd, who wrote for the dear departed *News-Chronicle*, was practically a household name. People turned to his essays eagerly, knowing that whatever the subject, whether important or trivial, they would be charmed by his urbanity, humour and good sense.

Mr. Mortimer, a former literary editor of the *New Statesman*, has produced a "made" book with essays and reviews going back as far as the Forties, so that a lot of it seems somewhat dated. There are quite a few travel pieces about such places as Angkor, Venice and Florence in the following vein:

"This time I have found the Uffizi shut, the interior having been damaged. San Marco, for instance, is also inaccessible, but the Pitti is open and some of the Uffizi pictures are there. The Carmines frescoes and the Michelangelo sculpture in the Sagrestia Nuova seem more majestic than ever in a world that is losing all sense of human majesty."

Didn't Cole Porter once write a song about "the itty-bitty-Pitti"?

BUT IT WOULD BE very unjust to dismiss Mortimer as an amateurish bookman with good taste. He does know a lot about art and is extremely erudite. It is worthwhile reading him on Picasso when he articulates a lot of what we groundlings feel: "Many painters and writers have made beautiful works out of repulsive subjects. Picasso enjoys making repulsive works out of beautiful subjects."

In his essay on Mark Pattison, a brilliant 19th century Oxford scholar, he includes a memorable sentiment: "But those who pity themselves deserve special pity from others, since no practice is more dilapidating. It is wise, moreover, to assume that people — other people at any rate — can't help being what they are."

There are penetrating articles about Proust, Tennyson, Dr. Leavis, Cocteau, Anatole France, Colette, Firbank and other authors you always mean to read but somehow never get around to. It is to Mortimer's credit that he makes us conscious of what we may be missing, surely a reviewer's most important function.

But there is also far too much that conjures up visions of a velvet-jacketed gentleman, at ease in his mullion-windowed study, holding forth about Life and Literature. If the author and publishers had had the sense to cut out some of the more tedious ramblings about bygone clerics, they would have focused more deserved attention on the many good things in this collection.

Mr. Mortimer is his own best critic: "This is a shapeless scrap-heap of book, seeking to entertain rather than instruct. The reader is invited to take it in small doses."

The sex barrier

HENRY AND CATO by Iris Murdoch. London, Chatto and Windus, 336 pp. £4.

Matthew Nevisky

INHERITING the ancestral estate on the accidental death of his older brother, Henry Marshalsen returns from self-imposed exile to tell his mother he is turning her out. He intends to sell Laxlinden Hall and all its furnishings, parklands and farms, and then give away all the proceeds. He then informs his mother that her much lamented first son had been keeping an ageing, unlettered tart in London. Henry has just met the tough-crust tart. And he intends to marry her. This to mum is like adding incest to injury.

Meanwhile, at the next stately home over the hill, we find Cato Forbes. Cato shocked his family some years back when, in a burst of inspiration, he decided to become a Roman Catholic, and later a priest. Now he's screwing up his courage to re-shock them by dropping out of the faith. Cato, or Father Forbes, suddenly no longer believes in God. Instead, he believes in an angel-faced teenage hoodlum called Beautiful Joe. Cato can't decide if he wants to save Joe or seduce him, and vice versa.

Not finished yet. Cato has a pretty young sister who is madly in love with Henry. Henry really doesn't love his dead brother's hooker, but still intends to marry her. The hooker, however, is hooked on the stately home which Henry is determined to abandon. And the teddy boy lusts after all that money which Henry wants to divest himself of. The kid also fancies Father Forbes' sister. Oh, he professes love for Cato, too, but then Cato went and dropped Joe's revolver in the Thames. Joe's still smarting over that act of disloyalty. But that's all right. He really prefers cutting people, especially those who cut him socially.



Iris Murdoch: death as ringmaster.

CLASS, PROPERTY, money, love and religion — all very much the grand stuff of English novels, and of course it doesn't fail to intrigue. Iris Murdoch is an experienced manipulator of such materials, and beyond that, she has a passionate commitment to exploring the need for salvation and the struggle to get along without it. Moreover, she has a philosophy of death-as-ringmaster-of-life, which is perhaps profounder than that

found in the Catholic novels of Graham Greene, and a feeling for violence which is closer to the mark than that of a lot of other women novelists. But while all this may help to grip the reader's imagination, it surely won't knead it. The novel falls just short of succeeding because of — for want of a better word — the author's "womanishness." And lest this term banish me forever to the realm of chauvinist pigdom, I hasten to assert that novelistic womanishness has nothing to do with the sexual giblets that happen to be appended to the novelist. Henry James, for example, is usually more womanish than Jane Austen.

In *Henry and Cato*, "I have something important to tell you" and "Well, please come in" are invariably followed by a page or two of room furnishings, right down to the tassels on the lamps and the way the velvet curtains hold the afternoon light.

This is not a dramatic tactic to delay action. Nor is it merely misplaced aestheticism. And it is not just an interior decorator's reflex. It is more the failure to penetrate through to the heart, offering instead the handwork of the exterior decorator (Henry James minding his and everyone else's manners). And exterior decorators paper over what they cannot get at on the inside.

An even more damning piece of evidence is Murdoch's utter inability to write credible scenes between men, especially men discussing ideas. She may be able to pass off her melodramatic plot, but she's simply too womanish to make her men more than cartoon figures. At their worst, their conversations are ludicrous. Or, as one lady novelist who could write beyond the sex barrier once described it to me, the characters simply fling chunks of undigested thesis at one another.

Strange charge to be made against such an experienced craftsman as Iris Murdoch. This is, in fact, Murdoch's 18th work of fiction. All we can say is that Iris Murdoch has done it again. And again and again. □

A nasty lot

THE SURVIVORS By Simon Raven. London, Blond & Briggs, 286 pp. £3.95.

Daniel Gavron

SIMON RAVEN is known to Israelis for his brilliant television adaptations of Huxley's *Point Counter Point* and Trollope's *The Pallisers*; but he is also a novelist of some accomplishment and has just completed an epic 10-novel series "Alms for Oblivion."

The final novel, *The Survivors*, is, in fact, one of the weaker ones, pushing its rather thin plot to the limit, but neatly tying up the loose ends in those that have come before.

The series purports to give a picture of the British upper and upper-middle classes after the war. And what a nasty lot they are! The rules were set in Raven's first novel, *The Feathers of Death* (not part of the series). In the words of Raven's discoverer and publisher, Anthony Blond, "We are being introduced to one man's world, a little off-centre, perhaps a little off-centred, selfish and corrupt. Raven, too, is an ex-soldier and a novelist; can this be a lacerating self-portrait?" The novels have complicated and ingenious plots. Raven is at

have it chopped off."

I think I prefer the rather pitiful statement of the Marquis Canteloupe, one of Raven's best characters: "When it comes down to brass tacks, one's better off working with a bit. They'll kick you in the ghoules as soon as look at you, but one knows that, and can be ready for it. It's these chaps who have scruples that really kill you dead. They'll drop you in a sewer to drown, when you least expect it, and then go round whining that it was their moral duty." If "Alms for Oblivion" has a message, surely this is it.

THE SERIES is a considerable tour-de-force. There are some 100 characters, about 12 of them main characters; but there is one who appears in eight of the 10 novels and is a central character in four of them: the ex-soldier and novelist, Fielding Gray.

Apart from his misfortune (he was horribly disfigured in Cyprus), Gray is the least sympathetic of a very unappealing bunch. He is weak, petulant, self-pitying, treacherous, selfish and corrupt. Raven, too, is an ex-soldier and a novelist; can this be a lacerating self-portrait?

The novels have complicated and ingenious plots. Raven is at

his superb beat when writing of public school and the army (*Fielding Gray, Babes Squadron, Sound the Retreat!*); good on politics and journalism (*The Rich Pay Late, Friends in Low Places, The Judas Boy, Bring Forth the Body, The Survivors*); but weak on the world of films and universities (*Come Like Shadows, Places Where They Sing*). He is at his very worst when writing about women.

His women are, at best, good-natured pleasure instruments (Maisele the whore); at worst, spiteful and degraded creatures. None of them really comes to life. Of interest to Israeli readers would be his treatment, in several of the books, of the Suez Campaign, and the various intrigues around it in the Conservative Party. The only really sympathetic characters in the whole series — apart from Maisele — are two Jews: Gregory Stern, the publisher (Blond?), and Daniel Mond, a brilliant and idealistic Cambridge mathematician.

I would suggest that "Alms for Oblivion" is probably one of the most readable and entertaining series of novels ever published. But it's not for the squeamish. Now that we are facing an election campaign, Simon Raven's books, with their stress on the venal aspects of public life, could act as a corrective to the exaggerated moral piety which suddenly seems to be swamping us. □

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